



Candidate Brief for the position of

CEO

The Marches LEP

April 2021

The Marches LEP

This is an incredibly exciting time to consider joining the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) as it plays a central and leading role in driving accelerated economic growth across the region.

The Marches LEP is a partnership of business, education and the local authorities of Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford & Wrekin; it is investing in innovation, higher level skills, business support and critical infrastructure programmes and investment into business sites.

The LEP's vision for the Marches is of a strong, diverse, and enterprising business base, operating in an exceptional and connected environment, where the transfer of technology and skills foster innovation, investment, and economic growth. In recent years, the Marches LEP has successfully delivered a £120m capital investment programme in the region alongside £100m of European Structural Investment Fund.

It is developing a vibrant regional economy, putting business at the heart of our work, and removing barriers to growth so that sustainable jobs can be created.

The LEP is one of 38 LEPs in England, established in 2011, each tasked with driving economic growth in their region. At present HM Government are reviewing the future role LEPs will play in the economic recovery after the pandemic, with a decision likely in summer 2021.

Over the last ten years, the Marches LEP has co-ordinated action to stimulate economic development, through programmes and projects focused on housing, transport, infrastructure, broadband availability, inward investment, and skills; the Marches LEP is aiming to improve the economic prosperity of the region.

The LEP works in partnership with the economic development teams of Telford and Wrekin, Herefordshire, and Shropshire Councils to deliver the Marches Growth Hub which provides support to businesses from small high-tech firms in remote rural locations to internationally renowned companies in vibrant town centres and busy market towns in order to understand what needs to be done to tackle barriers to growth.

The Marches LEP is set to play an evolving role in the region's economic recovery post Covid-19, in particular leveraging the unique perspective and access that it has at the interface of the commercial and public sectors to ensure there is a strong business voice in the economic plans for the region. In particular looking to harness the significant expertise within the team to feed into and support the delivery of much needed infrastructure investment.

To read more about our work in the Marches, the 2020 Annual Report can be downloaded below:

[The Marches LEP Annual Report 2020](#)

[The Marches LEP Annual Economic Review 2019](#)

The Marches

The Marches is a distinctive area which is home to 30,775 businesses and a £14.3 billion economy.

The region, which includes Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford & Wrekin, is part of the Midlands and officially one of the most enterprising regions in the UK.

At its heart is the global birthplace of industry, part of a heritage which has sparked a revolution of a different kind with innovative hi-tech enterprises, land-based industries and entrepreneurs flourishing alongside global players.

High profile businesses which have chosen to base operations here, capitalising on the Marches' geographical location and sector strengths in advanced manufacturing, food and drink and defence and security, include BAE Systems, Ricoh, Denso, GKN Land Systems, Caterpillar Remanufacturing, Muller Wiseman Dairies, Avara Foods and Cap Gemini.

Ideas which changed the world were born in the Marches: The Industrial Revolution in the Ironbridge Gorge; the first modern skyscraper, the Flax Mill in Shrewsbury; the modern Olympic movement in Much Wenlock; the Mappa Mundi in Hereford and Darwin's Theory of Evolution.

These big ideas are evidence of the Marches' pioneering industrial heritage and its entrepreneurial spirit. It has demonstrated its ability to change and adapt to emerging technology and innovation, without losing sight of its rural advantage and the quality of life this offers.

One of the largest LEPs in the country, covering 2,300 square miles, it includes the main urban powerhouses of Telford, Shrewsbury, and Hereford and more than 30 market towns. Today the Marches has a vibrant SME business base, ready-made supply chains across multiple industry sectors and with its quality of life offer in one of the most beautiful regions of the UK, it is one of the fastest-growing investment locations in the Midlands.

[More information on the Marches and the LEPs Strategic Economic Plan can be found here.](#)

What We Do

Our vision for the Marches is of a strong, diverse, and enterprising business base, operating in an exceptional and connected environment, where the transfer of technology and skills fosters innovation, investment, and economic growth.

To achieve this vision, we are working with local partners, stakeholders, and the business community to identify barriers to growth.

And then we are prioritising projects which will help remove those barriers and drive growth.

From physical infrastructure work building roads to open up development sites to supporting connectivity programmes delivering superfast broadband – our task is not one without challenges.

We are working with central Government to ensure the region is getting a fair share of funding to deliver these projects.

The Evolution and future of LEP's

Local Enterprise Partnerships are private sector led partnerships between businesses and local public sector bodies. They were announced in 2010 to bring private sector expertise into local economic decision making and to encourage collaboration and strategic decision making at a functional economic area.

This was part of the Government's ambition to shift power away from central government to local communities, citizens, and independent providers, as set out in the Local Growth White Paper 2010. Following the 2013 Spending Review, Local Enterprise Partnerships acquired considerable new levers to promote development of local infrastructure to deliver the interventions that stimulate growth. Through three rounds of Growth Deals, the Government allocated over £9 billion to help Local Enterprise Partnerships deliver their investment priorities.

Local Enterprise Partnerships, such as the Marches LEP have increased private sector involvement in economic decision making, which encouraged greater collaboration between public sector leaders across administrative boundaries and ensured that effective investments are made across areas in growth priority projects. This will continue to be an important role as the UK re-bounds from the Covid-19 Pandemic, and as local and regional economies recover.

Local Enterprise Partnerships have also performed a strategic oversight function for EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). With the UK's departure from the European Union, it was announced that a new "Shared Prosperity Fund" would be established to replace these EU monies, and the role of LEPs in the oversight of such future funding is one of the areas that the UK Government is considering at present.

Where Local Enterprise Partnerships have played a significant and important role is in supporting local growth, none more so than during the Covid-19 Pandemic when LEPs introduced and deployed a huge range of support Initiatives for people and businesses impacted by Covid-19 as part of their immediate support response to help local businesses.

Local Economic Partnerships have a strong and direct relationship with the UK Government and with its key departments, in particular Treasury, MHCLG and BEIS. The soon to be published White Paper on devolution will expand further on the future roles of LEPs but it has been signalled, most recently in the 2021 Budget, that LEPs will likely pivot, and look to play a central and critical future role in the development and provision of higher-level skills, with a greater focus and remit for business support and skills.

The likely increase in major investment and infrastructure programmes, as part of the UK recovery programme will also see LEPs play a leading role in supporting partners and key stakeholders in developing their local and regional infrastructure plans.

This new focus for LEPs is building on the track record, expertise, and credibility that they have established over the past decade, positioning them well to take forward this new and evolving role in the UK's economic recovery and growth.

Job Description

Post: LEP Director

Reports to: LEP Chair

Grade: Local Government Senior Grade - £80,000 - £90,000 per annum

Purpose of the Post:

To facilitate the development and support the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan and post COVID Economic Recovery Plan for the Marches LEP working with the LEP Board and a wide range of stakeholders.

To set and drive the strategic direction for economic growth and ensure the delivery of the economic priorities of the Marches LEP.

To support the LEP Chair and Deputy Chair, the 15 member LEP Board and LEP sub-groups established to deliver the strategic, business, and financial plans.

The post holder will be:

- a) Responsible to the Marches LEP Chair and through the Chair to the LEP Board.
- b) Expected to lead and contribute to strategy development, oversee the delivery of LEP funded projects and programmes and build a range of local, regional, and national strategic relationships in order to achieve outcomes for the LEP.
- c) Responsible for the recruitment and management of the LEP team.
- d) To be ultimately responsible for ensuring the LEP complies with all standards of good governance in accordance with legal requirements and the requirements stipulated by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Accountability and Assurance Guidance for LEPs.

Shropshire Council is the employer and is responsible for the post holder's health and safety, training, and development.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Responsibilities:

- a) To lead the development and delivery of the Marches Strategic Economic Plan, the draft Local Industrial Strategy, and the development of a post COVID Economic Recovery Plan and any other requirements defined by the LEP Board and /or Government partners. This needs to be done in a way that captures, optimises, and strategically aligns stakeholder resources alongside Government funds that can contribute to the growth of the Marches economy.
- b) To work in partnership with Marches businesses, national government departments, national, regional, and local stakeholder organisations and other LEPs as required to generate and achieve economic outcomes for the Marches area.

- c) In conjunction with the Chair and the LEP Board to raise the profile and understanding of the Marches LEP with local, regional, and national stakeholders to help encourage inward investment and secure additional government funding and new revenue streams.
- d) To ensure the work of the Marches LEP adds value to and compliments the strategic aims of local authority, private sector and community and voluntary sector stakeholders.
- e) To lead on the development and revision of the Marches LEP proposals and submissions to Government and to co-ordinate initiatives across the Marches area to ensure activity contributes to the LEP vision and priorities.
- f) To provide effective leadership and guidance to the LEP Chair and Deputy Chair, the LEP Board, its Sub-Committees and delivery partners as required.
- g) To ensure the work of the LEP and the decisions taken by the Directors of Marches LEP Ltd are open and transparent to all stakeholders.

Operational Responsibilities:

- a) To support and provide leadership for the Marches LEP Team that support the LEP in its delivery of its projects and programmes. To line manage the Director for Corporate Services, the Partnership Manager and Programme Manager.
- b) To ensure the LEP's strategic plans and proposals are underpinned by a robust evidence base and appropriate stakeholder engagement. To implement the 2019 Marches Strategic Economic Plan, the draft 2019 Local Industrial Strategy and the delivery of an Economic Recovery Plan in 2021/22.
- c) To support the Chair and Deputy Chair in their duties and the Chairs of the LEP sub-groups as appropriate. With the Director of Corporate Service support the Chairs of all LEP Groups to ensure the bodies fulfil their terms of reference, review them annually and comply with the LEP conflicts of interest policy.
- d) To support the three Business Board Chairs in ensuring the Business Boards receive regular updates on the work of the LEP and that they are given the opportunity to contribute to LEP policies on issues that impact on the businesses in their respective areas.
- e) To seek to ensure that the LEP has effective business and community engagement strategies in place to ensure the voice of the wider Marches community gets heard by the LEP Board.
- f) To be the lead contact with the Communities and Local Government Regional Director and the Local Growth Team and to hold regular LEP progress meeting with them and ensure all relevant information is prepared for the LEP Annual Performance Review each spring and as required
- g) To provide briefings on policy development and attend meetings, as appropriate, on behalf of the LEP Chair and the LEP Board with Midlands Engine and the Growing Mid Wales Partnership and any other relevant stakeholder or strategic partnerships that may be developed.
- h) To attend national LEP Network and regional LEP Chief Officer and Chairs meetings and to build relations with other LEPs on cross LEP initiatives, projects, and best practice sharing.
- i) To ensure a LEP stakeholder management plan is produced and updated annually and that meetings with local MPs and other key stakeholders including business representation organisations are held on at least a six-monthly basis. To ensure the LEP reports on its activities to the relevant scrutiny panel at each of the three local authorities at least once a year.

- j) To proactively develop and manage annual budgets for the LEP, its Core team and any other budget streams that may become available and ensure that there is effective and timely management of all LEP projects and programmes.
- k) To oversee the work with the LEP's Accountable Body to ensure that all budgets are monitored and to ensure that financial risk is considered and managed in line with the LEP's Assurance Framework. To work within the Scheme of Delegation agreed by the LEP Board. To ensure regular reporting on project and programme performance to the Performance Risk and Monitoring Committee and the LEP Board.
- l) To be ultimately responsible for the effective delivery of the Growth Deal and Getting Building Fund programmes of projects, the Marches Investment Fund and the Marches Growth Hub and the implementation of the LEP Skills Action Plan and Skills Hub and any subsequent funding streams that are delivered through LEPs.
- m) To be ultimately responsible for ensuring, through the Director of Corporate Services, that the Articles of Association of Marches LEP Ltd as agreed by the LEP Board are adhered to and to ensure the LEP Risk Register is maintained and reviewed by the LEP Performance Risk and Monitoring Committee and the LEP Board at each meeting.
- n) To maintain excellent relations and regular dialogue with the S151 officer to ensure the Accountable Body is aware of all LEP activities and to review on a regular basis with the S151 the Service Level Agreement between the LEP and the Accountable Body.
- o) Responsible for ensuring, through the Director of Corporate Services, that the Marches LEP accountability and assurance framework is adhered to in all cases and reviewed annually in line with the MHCLG Accountability and Assurance Guidance.
- p) To oversee the procurement and delivery of a strategic marketing and communications plan, to include marketing and PR and social media activity. To oversee the management of the LEP Website and ensure it is accessible and up to date and a positive shop window on the work of the LEP.
- q) To ensure the LEP holds annual public events when stakeholders can question the LEP Chair and CEO on its activities and that an annual report on the LEP activities is produced.
- r) To ensure the LEP complies with public procurement and state aid rules when it needs to commission external support to deliver work to support the LEP Team in delivering its responsibilities.
- s) To undertake any other duties deemed necessary from time to time, as directed by the Chair or Board.

General Approach to Duties:

- To adopt a customer focused approach when undertaking the role, ensuring a positive approach to engagement with stakeholders and service users alike and maintain an appropriate personal profile.
- To act as an advocate for the work of the LEP and work collaboratively with colleagues across the whole Partnership to meet the needs of the people of Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford & Wrekin.
- To meet individual, service and personal development targets agreed through the Personal Development Review Process, learn from experience, and be committed to continuous improvement individually and as an employee of the LEP.

- To work with colleagues to meet the team's key performance indicators, support a culture of team working and ensure the team functions successfully in support of the Partnership's objectives.
- To meet the behaviours and competencies adopted by the LEP in the way in which they achieve their objectives and carry out their work.

These duties are illustrative and not exhaustive. The post holder will be expected to become involved in a range of work to enable the Marches LEP Team to respond effectively to the changing requirements of the Partnership.

Conditions of Service

The conditions of service are those laid down by Shropshire Council, which have been adopted and amended as necessary from those laid down by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. The principal location will be the Marches LEP Office in Shrewsbury but may also be expected to operate from partner offices in Hereford and Telford.

This post is subject to the following:

- a) The post is fixed term until 31 March 2023 for 37 hours per week. There may be an opportunity to extend this in due course.
- b) Normal office hours are 8.45am - 5pm Monday - Thursday and 8.45am - 4pm Friday with a lunch break of 40 minutes.
- c) Due to the nature of the role the post holder will be required to attend evening meetings plus work flexibly to ensure work deadlines are met.

This post carries eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. Information about this will be sent with any formal offer of appointment.

Annual leave entitlement is pro rata for 25 days per year plus additional days for long service. Bank holidays also apply. A concessionary day at Christmas Bank Holiday is at the Council's discretion.

The appointment is subject to six months' notice in writing on either side.

The appointment is subject to six months' satisfactory probationary service during which time the notice period will be one month on either side.

Smoking is not allowed in Council buildings or in the LEP Office.

It is a condition of the appointment that you provide: -

1. A suitable vehicle for the performance of your duties and that this is readily available for use during normal working hours.
2. The vehicle is insured for business use.
3. You present your driving licence on an annual basis and a copy is taken by Shropshire Council.

You are entitled to claim for reimbursement of the costs of travel on LEP business at the rate of 45 pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles per annum and 25p after 10,000 miles/annum.

Person Specification

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent.
- Relevant postgraduate or professional qualification with evidence of relevant CPD.

Work Related Experience

- Proven track record at a senior level of effective planning, control, and monitoring of budgets, legal, HR, risk functions, procurement, data protection and health and safety.
- Extensive experience of partnership working, including negotiating, communicating and joint working with internal/external organisations to achieve outcomes.
- Wide experience of managing sensitive issues in a highly political environment.

Specialist Knowledge/Skills

- Excellent knowledge and experience of working with senior level civil servants and MPs and the way Government Departments and the Houses of Parliament operate.
- Proven experience of managing and bidding for a range of public sector funding sources and their regulations.
- Highly advanced communication and presentational skills.
- Extensive experience of preparing/reporting at Board level in an equivalent public/private sector organisation and supporting a Board with its governance.
- Effective use of Microsoft office (including Outlook, Excel, Word, and PowerPoint) and relevant databases.

Personal Skills

- Ability to motivate self and the wider team and to prioritise and act decisively.
- Excellent interpersonal skills that can be used to engage with a wide range of audiences.
- Strong analytical, information and problem-solving skills.
- Communicates orally in a clear, fluent, concise, and appropriate way, which holds people's attention both in groups and in one-to-one situations.
- Makes firm and well-considered decisions about ideas and courses of action within realistic timescales.
- Displays assertiveness and independence of thought and action without overstepping agreed boundaries.
- Excellent facilitation and negotiation skills and experience of consensus building.
- High standards of integrity, honesty, and professionalism.
- Committed to acting corporately and collaboratively – inside and outside the organisation.
- Ability to give advice and guidance to help develop the knowledge and skills of team members.
- Politically astute with senior level experience across the political spectrum.
- Ability to work effectively under pressure, meet deadlines and targets.
- Pursue diversity policies that raise awareness of the issues and tackle barriers to an inclusive way of working.
- Facilitate the effective delivery of actions and plans by communicating with enthusiasm and turning aims into achievable goals.

How to Apply

For detailed information on how we process your personal data, please review our privacy policy on our website <https://www.berwickpartners.co.uk/privacy-policy/>

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and / or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

If you have any queries or would like more information in regard to this document, please contact:

Marek Dobrowolski
Associate Partner

D: +44 121 654 5912

M: +44 779 352 9576

Marek.Dobrowolski@berwickpartners.co.uk

Ruth Hernandez Turner
Researcher

D: +44 121 654 5936

Ruth.HernandezTurner@berwickpartners.co.uk